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The Life Of Israel



Chronology
of
Israel's Struggle To Be Born, Survive and Advance

1947 -- 1957

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

This is the story of Israel's struggle to be born.

Israel was attended at birth by war, boycott and the struggle of the great powers for dominance in the Middle East.

Despite this background, Israel has held consistently to three objectives:

1. The open door policy for all Jews needing and wishing to find haven in Israel.
2. The development of the country for the common good of all its inhabitants.
3. Peaceful relations with its Arab neighbors, as with the rest of the world.

The chronology of the struggle for birth, survival and advance as a democratic and progressive country is presented in the succeeding pages.

From that chronology may be seen the extent to which Israel, in one decade, has moved forward to achieve political stability and its three major objectives.

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1947

November 29

The United Nations General Assembly votes for the partition of Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish State, an Arab State, and an International Zone of Jerusalem, joined by economic union.

November 29

Arab delegates inform the United Nations they will oppose the implementation of the resolution.

November 30

Directed by the Arab Higher Committee and the Arab League, Arab attacks on the Jewish population of Palestine begin, assisted by Arab soldiers calling themselves "volunteers" and infiltrating from neighboring Arab lands.

1948

March 1

The National Council of Palestine Jews, proceeding in accordance with the United Nations resolution, sets up a Council of the people and an administration to serve as the provisional organs of state, following the termination of the British Mandate.

March 1 - May 1

In four stages, responding to broadcast instructions of the Arab Higher Committee and Arab war leaders, Arabs evacuate Palestine. The purpose is to clear the roads and villages to expedite the advance of the Arab Armies, to disrupt services, and to demonstrate that Jews and Arabs could not live side-by-side, in anticipation of a speedy Arab victory.

April

The United Nations Palestine Commission reports to the United Nations that it is unable to implement the 1947 resolution because: "Powerful interests both in and outside Palestine are defying the resolution of the General Assembly and are engaged in a deliberate effort to alter by force the settlement envisaged therein. Armed Arab bands from neighboring Arab states, together with local Arab forces, are defeating the purposes of the resolution by acts of violence."

May 14

The British formally end their Mandate and complete the withdrawal of their forces from Palestine.

May 14

The Provisional State Council, from Tel-Aviv, proclaims the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine, to be called Medinat Yisrael (The State of Israel).

The Proclamation of Independence pledges:

1. "The State of Israel will be open to the immigration of Jews from all the countries of their dispersion, will promote the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants, will be based on the principles of liberty, justice and peace, as conceived by the Prophets of Israel, will uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinction of religion, race or sex; will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, education and culture; will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions, and will loyally uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter."

2. The Proclamation calls "upon the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve the ways of peace and play their part in the development of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its bodies and institutions - provisional and permanent."

3. The Proclamation extends its "hand in peace and neighborliness to all the neighboring states and their peoples" and invites them "to cooperate with the independent Jewish nation for the common good of all."

- May 14 The Government of the United States gives de facto recognition to the State of Israel, becoming the first nation to do so.
- May 15 The regular armies of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria launch an organized attack on Israel, after first proclaiming their intention to do so to the Security Council of the United Nations.
- Simultaneously, the Arab League initiates a blockade against Israel, including a ban on all trade with Israel, as well as a denial to it of the right to use the Suez Canal.
- May 15 Israel opens its doors to the survivors of Hitlerism in the Displaced Persons camps and elsewhere, and begins the fulfillment of its pledge of free immigration to all Jews seeking it.
- May 16 Dr. Chaim Weizmann is elected President of the Provisional Council of the State of Israel.
- May 18 The U.S.S.R. grants de jure recognition to Israel.
- May 24 Israel agrees to a cease-fire order from the Security Council.
- May 26 The Arab states reject the order to cease fire by the Security Council.
- May 26 The Israel Defense Army is established under an ordinance issued by the Provisional Council of State.
- June 11 A truce is established by the United Nations for a 30-day period. It follows the success of the Israel Defense forces in pushing back the armies of the Arab states and in lifting the siege of Jerusalem.
- June 11 An administration and services essential to the new State are organized.
- July 1 A Merchant Fleet is established, consisting of 10 vessels with a displacement of 14,000 tons.
- July 8 The Arabs resume hostilities, which last for ten days.
- July 18 The second truce begins.
- August 6 Israel asks the United Nations Mediator "to transmit to the Governments of the Arab states, now at war with Israel, our offer that their representatives should meet with the representatives of the Provisional Government of Israel, for the purpose of peace negotiations."
- August 16 The first currency of the new State, inscribed in both Hebrew and Arabic, is issued and becomes legal tender.
- September 14 The Supreme Court of Israel is inaugurated.

<u>October 15</u>	New Arab attacks begin, the target point of which is the capture of the Negev.
<u>October 21</u>	The fighting ends with the isolation of the Egyptian troops, the liberation of Beersheba by Israel, and the opening of free land communications to the Negev settlements.
<u>November 15</u>	Israel renews the offer of peace negotiations with the Arabs.
<u>November</u>	The first Israel commercial airline, EL-AL, is established.
<u>December 29 - 31</u>	The Israel Defense forces clear all of Galilee.
<u>December 31</u>	The number of new immigrants into Israel reaches the total of 102,000 in the first seven months following the State's establishment, despite the Arab war.

1949

- January 7 Hostilities in southern Israel end with the defeat of the Egyptian invaders.
- January 20 The United States Export-Import Bank extends a \$100 million loan to Israel for development purposes.
- January 25 The first general elections for the first Parliament of the new State are held. The vote is by secret ballot of Arabs as well as Jews, of the age of 18 and over, men and women alike.
- February 14 The first Parliament of Israel is opened in Jerusalem by Dr. Chaim Weizmann.
- February 17 Dr. Chaim Weizmann is elected the first President of Israel.
- February 24 An Egyptian-Israel Armistice agreement is signed on the Island of Rhodes.
- March 7 David Ben-Gurion is inducted as Prime Minister of Israel, together with his Cabinet.
- Government departments for Moslem and Christian religious affairs are set up, to assure the uninterrupted religious life of the Moslem and Christian communities.
- March 12 The Israel flag is hoisted at the ancient Port of Elath, on the Gulf of Aqaba, the southernmost tip of the new State.
- March 23 An Israel-Lebanon Armistice agreement is signed at Ras Naqura.
- April 23 An Israel-Jordan Armistice agreement is signed at Rhodes.
- April 30 Israel informs the United Nations Palestine Conciliation Commission that its purpose is to transform the Armistice agreements into an "honorable and lasting peace"; and submits a draft treaty.
- May 11 Israel is admitted to the United Nations as a member.
- Upon being admitted to the United Nations, Israel's Foreign Minister tells this body: "The pursuit of peace is a treasured part of the Jewish heritage....that pledge becomes an earnest and urgent appeal, when addressed to our closest neighbors, the Arab states and other nations of the Middle East."
- June The Research Council of Israel is established, attached to the Prime Minister's office, for the purpose of organizing and coordinating research in the natural sciences and technology, to accelerate maximum development of all the country's resources.
- July 20 An Israel-Syrian Armistice agreement is signed in No-Man's Land, near Mahanayim.

All four agreements provide that:

ARTICLE I

"1. The injunction of the Security Council against resort to military force in the settlement of the Palestine question shall henceforth be scrupulously respected by both Parties.

"2. No aggressive action by the armed forces--land, sea, or air--of either Party shall be undertaken, planned, or threatened against the people or the armed forces of the other; it being understood that the use of the term 'planned' in this context has no bearing on normal staff planning as generally practiced in military organizations.

"3. The right of each Party to its security and freedom from fear of attack by the armed forces of the other shall be fully respected.

"4. The establishment of an armistice between the armed forces of the two Parties is accepted as an indispensable step toward the liquidation of armed conflict and the restoration of peace in Palestine."

ARTICLE II

"1. In pursuance of the foregoing principles and of the resolutions of the Security Council of 4 and 16 November, 1948, a general armistice between the armed forces of the two Parties--land, sea and air--is hereby established.

"2. No element of the land, sea or air military or paramilitary forces of either Party, including non-regular forces, shall commit any warlike or hostile act against the military or paramilitary forces of the other Party, or against civilians in territory under the control of that Party; or shall advance beyond or pass over for any purpose whatsoever the Armistice Demarcation Line set forth in Article VI of this Agreement, except as provided in Article III of this Agreement; and elsewhere shall not violate the international frontier; or enter into or pass through the air space of the other Party or through the waters within three miles of the coastline of the other Party."

1950

January 23

The Knesset proclaims Jerusalem the capital of the State.

The Arab League formalizes the boycott against Israel in an official decision, prohibiting any form of cooperation between the Arab states and Israel, including trade, shipping, travel and cultural relations.

February 6

Egypt decrees the blockade against Israel and the Suez Canal as applying both to Israel ships and ships of other nations carrying cargo to Israel. Banned cargo include commercial vehicles, spare parts, medicine, chemicals, food, petroleum products, as well as arms and ammunition.

Thereafter, "contraband" cargoes are confiscated from ships flying the Norwegian, Australian, Greek and Italian flags.

(Egypt extends the blockade to the international waters to the Gulf of Aqaba, despite a prior commitment to the United States that it would allow peaceful shipping through the Gulf. It occupies the Islands of Tiran and Sanafir, at the mouth of the Gulf, fortifies them, and sets up gun emplacements at Sharm-el-Sheikh at the tip of the Sinai Peninsula. Israel's Port of Elath is completely immobilized as a result.)

May 8

Israel offers through the Palestine Conciliation Commission, to negotiate any outstanding question with any or all the Arab states.

June 13

The Knesset votes in favor of a Constitution by evolution, similar to the evolution of the British Constitution.

July 5

The Knesset passes the Law of Return, granting to every Jew the right to immigrate to Israel, should he so choose.

September 21

Israel offers, through the Palestine Conciliation Commission, to sign non-aggression pacts with the Arab states.

September 24

47,000 Yemenite Jews are brought to Israel by air to escape persecution in their ancient homeland, in an undertaking known as "Operation Magic Carpet."

The Israel Ministry of Health establishes 28 clinics in Arab areas, and four mobile clinics for the Arabs in the Negev, Western and Eastern Galilee, these to supplement a tuberculosis hospital for Arabs in Nazareth, 9 urban welfare administration offices for Arabs, 21 provincial welfare offices for Arabs, and medical services for the Arab schools. In addition, Arabs have access to all public clinics in the country.

September

The Government of Israel initiates a seven-year project--the draining of 15,000 acres of the Huleh swamps, designed to make available

hundreds of new farming units in the drained area.

December 31

The number of new arrivals in Israel comes to a total of 169,405, while the number of new settlements established in 1950 has risen to 94.

ISRAEL'S TEN-YEAR GROWTH

As it celebrates its Tenth Anniversary, the State of Israel notes the strides it has made in improving its social and economic strength. Some aspects of its growth are revealed by the following figures:

Population:

Israel's population has grown to 1,872,000, almost tripling the 1948 figure. Of this number, 864,000 entered the country after the establishment of the State; half of these came from Moslem countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

The Arab population of Israel, all citizens of the State and enjoying equal rights, totals 204,000.

Agriculture:

Production has increased to the point where 60 percent to 65 percent of local food consumption is produced within Israel's borders. Under government stimulus, 470 new agricultural villages have been established.

The land under cultivation has increased from 412,500 acres in 1948 to 930,000 acres in 1956.

In the Negev, 75 new settlements were established -- where none existed before.

Irrigated area now totals 250,000 acres, an increase of 300 percent by comparison with 1948.

Vocational Training:

The vocational training program engages 15.3 percent of the population in agriculture, 42 percent in industry, mining, construction and transportation. Less than 2 percent of those who came to Israel had agricultural experience, while more than 50 percent lacked vocational or professional training of any kind.

Industry:

At the time of the State's establishment, there was little organized industry. Today, Israel's industries include steel, copper, pipes, tire and rubber goods, electrical appliances, paper products, refrigerators, radios, Diesel engines, automobile assembly, fertilizers and light tools.

The chemical industry includes the exploitation of the mineral resources of the Dead Sea and the Negev. Among these are potash, caustic soda, magnesium, bromine, rock phosphate, ceramic clays, glass sand, feldspar, manganese, iron and mica.

Water:

Israel's water supply for industry and agriculture has been quadrupled.

Infant Mortality:

In 1948, Israel's infant mortality stood at 51.7 deaths per 1,000 births. This figure has now dropped to 32.3 deaths per 1,000 births.

ISRAEL'S 10-YEAR

- **POPULATION: Almost tripled**

1948:	650,000	
1956:	1,872,380	

- **INDUSTRY: Sevenfold increase**

1948:	negligible	
1956:	\$700 million	

Electricity: (in thousands kilowatt hours)

1949:	329,205	
1956:	1,142,673	

Exports: Tripled

1949:	\$29,680,000	
1956:	107,246,000	

Imports:

1949:	\$253,120,000	
1956:	363,974,000	

- **AGRICULTURE:**

Cultivated Area (in acres): Doubled

1948:	412,000	
1957:	956,250	

Production: Almost tripled

1948 Index:	100	
1956 Index:	289	

Irrigation: (in acres) Nearly quadrupled

1948:	75,000	
1957:	275,000	

Water Usage (in cubic meters): Quadrupled

1948:	250 million	
1956:	1000 million	

GROWTH AT A GLANCE

SHIPPING

Vessels: Tripled

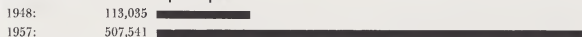


Tonnage: Ninefold increase

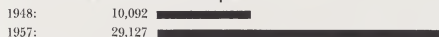


EDUCATION

School Attendance: Almost quadrupled



Arab School Attendance: Almost tripled



Teachers: Almost doubled

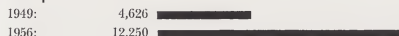


PUBLIC HEALTH

Hospitals: Almost doubled



Beds: Tripled



PHYSICIANS: (3887)

(Comparison ratio of physicians to population)

Israel	1 to 400 persons	India	1 to 7100 persons
Egypt	1 to 3500 persons	Switzerland	1 to 700 persons
	United States	1 to 760 persons	

Hospitals:

There are 102 hospitals with a bed capacity of 12,250. This compares with a former figure of 63 hospitals and 4,626 beds.

There are 3,887 physicians in active practice, making Israel one of the world's best-cared for populations. This figure means one doctor to 400 persons.

Education:

The expanded educational system includes 102 elementary schools, 278 schools for working youth, 76 high schools, 27 teacher colleges, 42 technical schools, 38 agricultural schools, as well as 92 continuation schools with a student body of 7,581 taught by 981 teachers.

There are 116 Arab elementary schools and 6 Arab high schools, in addition to complete freedom of access by Arabs to all other educational facilities.

The total student body in elementary schools is 359,000, taught by 8,365 teachers, as against 86,387 students and 4,153 teachers in 1948.

Students in high school total 23,000, taught by 1,149 teachers, as against 11,582 students and 704 teachers in 1948.

Students enrolled in teacher colleges are 3,600, taught by 336 teachers, as against 1,470 students and 213 teachers in 1948.

Technical schools showed a 300 percent rise in enrollment.

School attendance of Arab children has doubled over those attending in 1948, with 90 percent of the boys and 60 percent of the girls enrolled in public schools.

Israel's educational system includes six institutions of higher learning: Hebrew University, Weizmann Institute of Science, Haifa Technion, University of Tel Aviv, Bar-Ilan University at B'nai Brak, and a new medical school built by Hadassah. Subjects taught include medicine, dentistry, pharmacology, agriculture, law, pure science, architecture, aeronautics, engineering, social sciences, economics, humanities, health and social services.

Broadcasting:

The Israel State Broadcasting Service conducts programs 17 hours daily, including news broadcasts at stated intervals in Arabic, English and French, as well as Hebrew.

Cultural Activities:

There are four symphony orchestras, 700 choirs, an opera company, six permanent theatrical groups and 50 little theatre groups in Israel.

Merchant Fleet:

Thirty-five vessels with a gross tonnage of 135,000 which include passenger liners, oil tankers and cargo ships, comprise the State's merchant marine. By the end of 1958, it is expected that 12 new vessels will be added, increasing tonnage to 250,000.

Air:

El-Al, the Israeli airline, conducts passenger and freight service to Asia, Europe, North America and Africa.

Communications:

Israel has direct telegraphic, cable and wireless communication with most countries.

1951

- February 27 The first Point-4 agreement between the United States and Israel is signed, under which the United States undertakes to grant Israel technical assistance in a number of development fields.
- March 15 Syria attempts by force to halt the project to drain the Huleh swamp.
- May 3 Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion visits the United States and launches Israel's first Independence Bond issue, intended to help make possible Israel's absorption of new immigrants.
- May 18 The United Nations authorizes Israel to continue its Huleh drainage project.
- June 12 Egypt formally announces to the Special Committee of the Mixed Armistice Commission, in justification of its blockade against Israel: "We are exercising the rights of war. We are still legally at war with Israel, and Armistice does not put an end to a state of war. It does not prohibit a country from exercising certain rights of war." This becomes the consistent explanation of Egypt and other Arab states for their continuous war on Israel, despite the existence of the Armistice agreements which specifically enjoins such policies.
- July 11 Israel brings to the Security Council its complaint against Egypt's blockade of Israel in the Suez Canal, as "jeopardizing the Armistice agreement and endangering peace and security in the Middle East."
- July 30 The second elections of the Knesset are held, in which 75,000 Arabs participate, including women. Eight Arab deputies are elected members of the Knesset, consisting of 120 members.
- July Israel completes the evacuation of 110,000 Jews from Iraq, who had been subjected to arrest, persecution and confiscation of their property.
- August 23 The United States and Israel sign in Washington a treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation.
- September 1 The Security Council of the United Nations adopts a resolution calling upon Egypt to terminate her blockade practices against Israel as being in contravention both of the 1888 Constantinople Convention and the 1949 Armistice agreement.
- September 13 The United Nations Palestine Conciliation Commission, at a conference in Paris, submits to the representatives of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Israel, a comprehensive pattern of proposals, suggesting that these be preceded by a solemn declaration by all the parties "to settle all differences, present and future, by

resort to pacific procedures, refraining from any use of force or acts of hostility."

Israel agrees to this declaration. The Arab states decline.

October 10

Israel obtains its first grant-in-aid from the United States under the Mutual Security Act in the sum of \$65 million, \$50 million of which is assigned to help in the integration of Jewish immigrants in Israel.

November 4

Israel announces its readiness to compensate Arab refugees for land abandoned in Israel.

November 19

Dr. Chaim Weizmann is elected President of Israel for a second term.

December 31

The total of new immigrants in 1951 reaches 173,901. The number of new settlements in the year totals 67.

1952

- January 26 The United Nations General Assembly adopts a resolution establishing a \$200 million fund to be used over a three-year period for work projects to help in resettling Arab refugees in the countries of their current abode.
- February 20 The Knesset adopts a new economic policy aimed at combatting inflation and increasing productivity, exports, and investment.
- May 7 - 14 The first International Congress ever held in Israel takes place in Jerusalem - an international symposium on desert research, organized by the Israel Research Council in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- June 4 The United States Congress grants \$73 million to Israel for the fiscal year 1952 - 1953 to aid in integration of immigrants and technical assistance.
- June 13 An Israel Atomic Energy Commission is established to supervise, coordinate and promote nuclear research.
- August 26 A petroleum law is passed, providing a legal framework for the exploration, drilling and production of oil and gas on terms profitable to the operators and fair to the country.
- September 10 An Israel-West German Reparation agreement is signed at Luxembourg, under which West Germany agrees to pay Israel \$750 million in goods and services on account of Jewish property confiscated by the Nazis.
- October 9 Israel agrees to release unconditionally \$2,800,000 worth of blocked Arab accounts in Israel banks to Arab refugees.
- November 9 Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of Israel, dies at his residence in Rehovoth, at the age of 76.
- December 1 Israel submits to the United Nations a blueprint for peace in the Middle East, proposing direct peace negotiations with the Arab states on all outstanding questions.
- December 8 Mr. Itzhak Ben-Zvi is elected President of Israel.
- December 11 A resolution, sponsored by eight powers, calling upon the Arab states and Israel "to enter at an early date into direct negotiations" for a "settlement of their outstanding differences", is passed by the Special (Ad Hoc) Political Committee of the United Nations.
- December 18 This resolution fails to command the necessary two-thirds majority in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly.

1953

<u>January - June</u>	Intensified border attacks on Israel are carried on, emanating from Jordan, and are retaliated in kind.
<u>March</u>	France and Israel conclude an agreement for cooperation in the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Israel is presently a source of heavy water production for France.
<u>April 23</u>	Jordan authorities reject the proposal for a high-level meeting, submitted by General William E. Riley, Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization.
<u>September 2</u>	Israel begins work on a hydro-electric project on the Jordan, near B'not Yaacov. This is protested by Syria to the Security Council.
<u>September 16</u>	Israel is elected to a Vice-Presidency at the Eighth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.
<u>September 22</u>	The first international exhibition in Israel takes place in Jerusalem on the conquest of the desert; more than 500 private firms, organizations and governments from 22 nations, as well as United Nations agencies, participate.
<u>October 21</u>	Ambassador Eric Johnston, special envoy of President Eisenhower, arrives in the Middle East to work out a plan for the joint use of Jordan River waters by Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.
<u>October 27</u>	The United Nations Security Council passes a resolution ordering the temporary suspension of work near B'not Yaacov, on Syria's complaint.
<u>November 12</u>	Israel proposes a high-level meeting of Israel and Jordan representatives to coordinate efforts to combat border incidents.
<u>November 18</u>	Israel passes a national insurance law as the first step in a comprehensive Social Security plan, a law providing for old-age pensions, workmen's compensation, maternity payments; Israel establishes a Social Security Board to administer the law.
<u>November 23</u>	Israel formally requests the United Nations Secretary General to convoke an Israel-Jordan conference, under Article XII of the Armistice Agreement, to prevent further impairment of the situation. Jordan refuses to respond to the Secretary General's invitation.
<u>December 8</u>	Israel's Prime Minister Ben-Gurion resigns. Mr. Moshe Sharett becomes the new Prime Minister.

1954

January 14

Israel is admitted to membership in the World Bank for Reconstruction and Development and in the International Monetary Fund.

January 22

The Soviet Union vetoes a draft resolution proposed by the Western powers in the United Nations Security Council which would have authorized the United Nations Chief of Staff to permit the resumption by Israel of work on the Jordan hydro-electric plant.

February 15

Israel abolishes capital punishment for murder, restricting the extreme penalty to persons convicted of aiding the Nazis.

March 20

The Soviet Union vetoes a resolution of the United Nations Security Council, supported by eight powers, calling upon Egypt to comply with the 1951 Security Council resolution to end its blockade in the Suez Canal.

April 21

The United States signs a bilateral military agreement with Iraq, whereby the United States undertakes to supply Iraq with arms. This agreement paves the way to the Bagdad Pact, initiated initially as a mutual assistance pact by Turkey, Iraq, and Pakistan, joined subsequently by Iran and Great Britain. The Pact is intended to be a northern tier defense arrangement against the Soviet Union.

July 27

Britain signs an agreement to end its 72-year occupation of the Suez Canal Zone, and to evacuate its \$1,500,000,000 Canal Zone base within 20 months. A seven-year treaty provides that Britain can return to the base in the event of an attack on Turkey or on an Arab country. The agreement, though recognizing the Suez Canal as an integral part of Egypt, also recognizes that it is a "waterway economically, commercially and strategically of international importance" and "the determination of both parties to uphold the 1888 Constantinople Convention guaranteeing freedom of navigation of the Canal."

September 1

Israel adopts a resolution, expressing deep concern with the policy of arming the Arab states pursued by the United States and Great Britain, while the Arab states threaten the existence of Israel. Israel notes the disregard of Israel security and the needs of stability and peace, entailed in the agreement for the evacuation of the Canal Zone.

September 28

The Israel ship Bat Galim is seized by Egypt at the entrance to the Suez Canal, carrying a cargo of beefhides and plywood on route to Israel from Eritrea. (The Israeli crew was released after months of detention. The vessel itself has never been yielded by the Egyptian Government.)

October 6

Israel, in the United Nations General Assembly, offers to conclude non-aggression treaties with the Arab states. The Arab response is negative.

October 27

Colonel Masser announces: "When the Suez issue has been disposed of, Egypt will be concerned with one problem only -- the problem of Palestine.... The Palestine problem will not be solved and there will be no peace between us and the Jews as long as a single grain of your soil (the Palestine-Arabs') remains in enemy hands."

November 26

Israel reaffirms in the United Nations its willingness to consider compensation for Arab lands abandoned in Israel, and to enter into negotiations on compensation with any appropriate United Nations organ in advance of any general settlement.

December 1

The Bank of Israel is opened as the sole bank of issue in Israel to "administer, regulate and direct the credit and banking system, in accordance with the economic policy of the Government and with the provisions of the law with a view to promoting monetary measures...."

1955

February 13

The Israel Government announces that it had acquired four of the seven Dead Sea Scrolls discovered by Bedouin shepherds near the Dead Sea in 1947. Israel establishes a national trust to be known as "The Shrine of the Book," under the chairmanship of the President of Israel, to hold in perpetual trust the Dead Sea Scrolls and other documents and monuments relating to the Bible.

February 24

Iraq and Turkey sign a mutual assistance pact.

April 4

Britain ends its preferential agreement with Iraq.

April 5

Britain joins the Bagdad Pact.

June 3

The United States and Israel initial an agreement, whereby the United States leases to Israel 13.2 pounds of enriched Uranium for the development of peaceful uses of atomic energy.

June

Israel completes the first of two pipelines from the Yarkon River north of Tel Aviv, to the waterless, but fertile soil of the northern Negev. With the second pipeline which will be completed in 1958, this system will supply the Negev with 200,000,000 cubic meters of water annually.

July 24

Prime Minister Ben-Gurion offers to meet Egypt's leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, at any time or any place--at Nasser's choosing--to discuss peace.

July 26

General elections are held for the Knesset: eight Arabs are elected as deputies in Israel's Parliament.

September 20

The first oil is struck in Israel, at Heletz, after years of prospecting.

September 27

Colonel Nasser announces the conclusion of an arms deal with Czechoslovakia, bartering cotton for arms. Later, it is known that the agreement is actually with the Soviet Union and that the initial agreement is for \$250 million worth of arms purchases at cut-rate prices.

The Egyptian-Russian arms deal gives Egypt superiority over Israel in all categories of weapons for use on land, sea or air, which Israel does not possess. The deal provides the means by which Nasser can make good his boast of destroying Israel. Most important, it opens the door to Russia's penetration of the Middle East, its displacement of the West.

The Egyptian-Russian arms deal is followed by a series of economic agreements with Russia, most of the countries in the Soviet bloc, and Communist China. This is followed by cultural agreements, with the teaching of the Russian language, displacing French and, in some instances, English, in Egyptian and Syrian schools.

October 11

Egypt informs Ambassador Eric Johnston that the Arab League had decided at a meeting in Cairo to defer decision on the Johnston plan for regional development of the Jordan River. Syria had vetoed the plan for political reasons. The plan had originally been accepted in its technical aspects by Arab and Israel engineers, and by irrigation experts. Sixty-one percent of the available waters were destined to go to Jordan, and 39 percent to Israel. The project would have irrigated 120,000 acres in Jordan, 33,000 in Syria, about 8,700 acres in Lebanon, and about 100,000 acres in Israel. The project would have made it possible for 200,000 people to find a livelihood in productive agriculture. The plan involved the expenditure of \$200 million over a 10-year period. Syria's hatred of Israel determined its action.

November 3

David Ben-Gurion offers to meet with the heads of Arab states to avert "dangers in the present unstable situation."

November 21

The Bagdad Pact comes into formal existence with the holding of the first meeting of its Council in Iraq. One of its first acts is to agree that Israel is never to be allowed to join the Pact.

December 11

David Ben-Gurion returns from his retirement at Sde Boker, and reassumes the posts of Prime Minister and Minister of Defense.

1955

Colonel Nasser organizes a special army, known as the "Fedayeen," to destroy Israel.

The year 1955 sees the campaign of violent propaganda and sporadic marauding, converted into an organized guerilla war through a para-military force directed and equipped by the Egyptian army, recruited for the most part from the destitute Arab population in the Gaza Strip. Many of the Fedayeen were murderers and criminals released from prison, on condition that they join the Fedayeen. Their function was to penetrate deep into Israel territory, blow up wells and water installations, mine roads, ambush road traffic, demolish settlers' homes while the Israelis are asleep, and collect military data.

Fedayeen bases are established in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, under the direction of the Egyptian Military Attaches.

The formation of this army and its purpose is openly proclaimed by Cairo radio August 31, 1955.

1956

January 16

Colonel Nasser pledges the reconquest of Palestine in a speech announcing a new constitution for Egypt.

January 19

Syria joins Egypt in an arms deal with Russia. (By 1957, the deal is estimated to be worth \$400 million. Equally important with the arms is the political reorientation of Syria to the Soviet Union on the economic, cultural and, finally, political level, which is climaxed on August 18, 1957, with the appointment of General Afif Bizri, the most extreme Leftist in the Syrian army, as Chief of Staff and Army Commander and Chief.)

February 15

A directive is issued by the Egyptian Commander of the Third Division to the commanders and officers in Arish, Rafah, Khan Yunis and Gaza, to prepare "for the important battle with Israel in which we are fully immersed with the aim of realizing our lofty position - that is, to overpower and destroy Israel in the shortest possible time and with the greatest brutality and bestiality in battle."

February 20

Israel completes a 48-mile railroad, linking the Negev with the national railroad system at Naan.

February 24

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles tells the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the Egyptian-Russian arms deal materially alters the situation "to the disadvantage of Israel." Nonetheless, the United States continues to refuse to sell arms to Israel, while continuing to supply arms both to Iraq and to Saudi Arabia.

April 21

Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Yemen form a joint military command, under Egypt, aimed at Israel.

June 19

Colonel Nasser declares in reference to the Fedayeen: "We are obliged to be strong in order to liberate the entire Arab land from Morocco to Bagdad and in order to retrieve the right of Palestine's people."

July 26

Egypt's President Nasser seizes the Suez Canal, ostensibly in retaliation for American withdrawal of United States support for construction of the Aswan Dam; Nasser takes the occasion to threaten Israel, while he denounces the West.

August 26

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles tells a Washington Press Conference: "Egypt is in defiance of a decision by the Security Council of the United Nations.....that under the terms of the treaty of 1888, Israel shipping was entitled to go through and that Egypt was not entitled to ban it, if it went through."

August 29

Radio Cairo announces a meeting of Fedayeen Commanders in Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, to concert a campaign against Israel.

September 21

The Soviet press attacks Israel for siding with the West in the Suez dispute, declaring that Israel wanted only to "profit by the crisis."

(In all subsequent discussions of the issue of the Suez Canal, Russia supported Egypt, opposed international operation of this international waterway, and was the first to send pilots to Egypt to help it operate the Canal, when the pilots of the legal company were withdrawn.

Beginning with the Suez crisis, the Soviet Union ranged itself fully with Egypt and, in subsequent undertakings, threatened the use of its force to protect the Arabs even to the extent of destroying Israel.)

October 13

A Fedayeen attempt is made on the life of Prime Minister Ben-Gurion.

October 22

Egypt, Jordan and Syria announce a unified military command, "the principal concern of which is war of destruction of Israel."

October 29

Israel strikes out to destroy the Fedayeen bases. In the course of five days, it succeeds in destroying the Egyptian-controlled Fedayeen bases in the Gaza Strip, and the Egyptian fortifications blockading the Gulf of Aqaba.

In the Sinai Desert the Israel defense forces capture and displace the Egyptian fortifications at Sharm-el-Sheikh. The Israelis also take the Islands of Tiran and Sanafir. This action produces two results: It puts an end to the terrorist campaign of the Fedayeen; it opens up the Port of Elath not only to commerce for Israel, but as an international waterway, free to peaceful traffic of the ships of all nations.

October 30

Israel informs the Security Council it is ready to negotiate peace with Egypt.

October 31

Following Israel's march on Sinai, Russia warns Israel that its future is at stake.

November 5

The United Nations votes to establish the United Nations Emergency Force, since stationed in Gaza, and at Sharm-el-Sheikh, the purpose of which is to prevent the outbreak of new hostilities.

The U.S.S.R. warns that Israel's "very existence as a state is at stake."

November 11

Great Britain, in a special report, estimates that Egypt had received, in a single year, \$420 million worth of military equipment, including bombers and other heavy equipment, and that the infiltration of technicians make it possible for the Russians to form military unions very quickly.

November 29

The Soviet Union proposes that the Israeli defensive troops be tried as war criminals, while Izvestia declares, "the very existence of Israel as a state is now in doubt."

The U.S.S.R. proposes a 24-hour strafing of Israel. Its offer of volunteers to take their place by the Egyptians is regarded as directed primarily against Israel.

December

By the end of December, the Arab boycott is extended to foreign firms having Jewish directors, while foreign firms doing business with Israel are called upon to suspend operations under the threat of being banned from the entire Arab world.

By the end of December, 100 ships have been blacklisted by Egypt, Israel cargoes confiscated to the value of \$5,600,000, an Israeli ship seized, while the cost to Israel, as a result of the ban on oil from the Middle East, was \$44 million.

By the end of December, Israel has acquired 19 newspapers, numerous weeklies and fortnightlies, the daily circulation of Israel's Hebrew press has reached 340,000, the week-end editions 416,000, while the circulation of foreign language newspapers has reached 103,300 daily, and 133,300 in the week-end edition.

1957

January 15

United Nations Secretary General Dag Hammerskjold upholds the international character of the Gulf of Aqaba in a report to the General Assembly, in which he states: "The international significance of the Gulf of Aqaba may be considered to justify the right of innocent passage through the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf, in accordance with recognized rules of international law."

January 19

Secretary General Hammerskjold, in a report to the General Assembly, declares: "None of the parties to the 1949 Armistice Agreement is entitled to claim belligerent rights, including the application of such rights in the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran. It follows from the finding of the Security Council in 1951...the parties of the Armistice Agreement may be considered as not entitled to claim any belligerent rights and will not assert belligerent rights (including, of course, such rights in the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran.)"

February 11

The United States issues a memorandum emphasizing the international character of the Gulf of Aqaba, the right of free and innocent passage through the Gulf, and the willingness of the United States to exercise and test this right. The memorandum declares: "The United States believes that the Gulf comprehends international waters and that no nation has the right to prevent free and innocent passage in the Gulf and through the Straits giving access thereto. We have in mind not only commercial usage, but the passage of pilgrims on religious missions, which should be fully respected."

The memorandum continues: "The United States recalls that on January 28, 1950, the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the United States that the Egyptian occupation of the two islands of Tiran and Sanafir at the entrance of the Gulf of Aqaba was only to protect the islands themselves against possible damage or violation and that 'this occupation being in no way conceived in a spirit of obstructing in any way innocent passage through the stretch of water separating these two islands from the Egyptian coast of Sinai, it follows that this passage, the only practicable one, will remain free as in the past, in conformity with international practices and recognized principles of the law of nations.'

"In the absence of some over-riding decision to the contrary, as by the International Court of Justice, the United States, on behalf of vessels of United States registry, is prepared to exercise the right of free and innocent passage and to join with others to secure general recognition of this right."

February 20

President Eisenhower, in a broadcast, states: "We should not assume that if Israel withdraws from Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt will prevent Israel shipping from using the Suez Canal or the Gulf of Aqaba. If, unhappily hereafter, Egypt violates the

Armistice Agreement, then this should be dealt with firmly by the Society of Nations."

March 1

Israel's Foreign Minister Golda Meir, on behalf of Israel, affirms Israel's own belief that the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran are international waterways; on the assumption that they would be so maintained, she announces to the General Assembly Israel's readiness to withdraw its forces from Sharm el Sheikh, with their place taken by the United Nations Emergency Force. She states:

"...The Government of Israel believes that the Gulf of Aqaba comprehends international waters and that no nation has the right to prevent free and innocent passage in the Gulf and through the Straits giving access thereto, in accordance with the generally accepted definition of those terms in the law of the sea.

"In its capacity as a littoral State, Israel will gladly offer port facilities to the ships of all nations and all flags exercising free passage in the Gulf of Aqaba. We have received with gratification the assurances of leading Maritime Powers that they foresee a normal and regular flow of traffic of all cargoes in the Gulf of Aqaba.

"Israel will do nothing to impede free and innocent passage by ships of Arab countries bound to Arab ports or to any other destination.

"Israel is resolved on behalf of vessels of Israel registry to exercise the right of free and innocent passage and is prepared to join with others to secure universal respect of this right.

"Israel will protect ships of its own flag, exercising the right of free and innocent passage on the high seas and in international waters.

"Interference by armed force with ships of Israel flag exercising the right of free and innocent passage in the Gulf of Aqaba and through the Straits of Tiran will be regarded by Israel as an attack entitling it to exercise its inherent right of self defense under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter and take all such measures as are necessary to ensure the free and innocent passage of its ships in the Gulf and in the Straits.

"Israel is now prepared to withdraw its forces from the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran in the confidence that there will be continued freedom of navigation for international and Israeli shipping in the Gulf of Aqaba and through the Straits of Tiran."

Foreign Minister Golda Meir appeals through the United Nations General Assembly for Arab-Israel peace, stating: "Can we, from now on -- all of us -- turn a new leaf and, instead of

fighting each other, can we all united fight poverty, disease, and illiteracy?...I can here pledge the Government and the people of Israel to do their part in this united effort. There is no limit to what we are prepared to contribute, so that all of us together can live to see a day of happiness for all our peoples, and see again from that region a great contribution to peace and happiness to all humanity."

March 1 - 8

The views expressed by the Government of Israel are supported in the United Nations General Assembly by the representatives of the United States, Argentina, France, Costa Rica, Great Britain, Italy, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland.

April 6

The United States ship, the Kern Hills, passes through the Gulf of Aqaba, testing the right to freedom of passage, to deliver oil to Israel at its Port of Elath.

April

Israel completes an eight-inch oil pipeline from Elath to a Mediterranean port.

May 14

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles tells a Washington Press Conference that the United States would not oppose an effort by Israel to test her rights by sending a ship through the Suez Canal.

May 15

This statement is confirmed by President Eisenhower.

May 20

Russia, in the United Nations Security Council, challenges Israel's right to test its use of the Suez Canal.

May 24

The Arab states, in a joint effort, try to persuade the United States to change its view on the international character of the waterways of Suez and Aqaba, and the rights of free and innocent passage.

June 3

Israel announces its support of the Eisenhower Doctrine.

The Economic Council of the Arab League decides to strengthen the boycott by blacklisting concerns selling vehicles to Israel, and foreign companies under contract to furnish Israel with goods and services, and further by establishing a unified system to control exports and imports to prevent Arab goods from reaching Israel and Israel goods from reaching Arabs through intermediaries.

June 18

Russia delivers three submarines to Egypt, the first Middle East country to acquire submarines.

June 23

The United States reiterates the views expressed on February 11 and makes public a State Department communication to shipping companies directing them promptly to report any denial of the right of "free and innocent passage."

June 28

The State Department, in an aide memoire, rejects Arab claims denying Israel's right to freedom of passage in the Gulf of Aqaba and the Suez Canal.

July

The first International Congress of Jewish Studies is opened in Jerusalem, participated in by 120 scholars from abroad and 350 from Israel.

September

The first International Stamp Exhibition in Israel is held at Tabil, 33 countries participating.

Twenty-six countries, represented by 1000 athletes, participate with 5,000 Israelis in the Fifth World Maccabee games.

An International Conference on Nuclear Structure is opened at the Weizmann Institute of Science at Rehovoth.

October 31

Israel completes its drainage of the Huleh swamps.

October

Excavations at Hatzor confirm Biblical accounts, according to a report by Dr. Yigal Yadin to the 13th Convention of the Israel Exploration Society.

The total of new immigrants absorbed by Israel since 1948 reaches the number of 899,567.

November

A Desert Research Institute is opened at Beersheba as part of a world-wide zone research enterprise supported by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

